UNIVERSITY OF IOWA STUDIES

STUDIES IN CHARACTER

THE CHARACTER VALUE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT STORIES

by

GEORGE W. BEISWANGER, Ph.D.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Finally the author wishes to acknowledge the continuous assist-
ance and encouragement of one who as Margaret Starbuck not only
saw the original dissertation through the mechanical preparation
but in innumerable ways improved the study itself. Later, in a
closer relationship, she has helped in the revision of the present
manuscript. Without her wisdom and skill this report would have
been much poorer than it is.

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CHAPTER I

A LOOK AT THE PROBLEM

For many generations the stories of the Old Testament, with similar material from the New Testament, have been regarded as the chief staple of moral and religious instruction. Even today over fifty per cent of American Sunday Schools continue to use curricula which rely upon the Bible for practically all the materials of teaching.

The past two or three decades, however, have witnessed the beginnings of a change. A great number of people, including many of the leaders in the new movement of religious education, are increasingly unsure that the Biblical material is as valuable as has been taken for granted. In many cases the criticism has become quite severe, particularly against the Old Testment stories. The article, ''Jimmie Goes to Sunday School,'' by C. H. Myers[1] is a popular sample. More fervid, perhaps, than judicial, it shouts what others have been quietly saying from other rostrums.

Of greater significance is the change in attitude towards the Bible stories on the part of those who are engaged in revising the curriculum for religious education. Since 1906, when the first thoughtful series of Sunday School graded texts was begun, there has been a gradually decreasing use of Bible material, especially material from the Old Testament (Smith, *45*). The one hundred per cent practice which marked all Protestant Sunday Schools at the time when the Uniform Series was introduced (in 1872) has been cut in half and then to a fourth and still further reduced, until it is possible today to go into schools of religion and not suspect from the type of instruction given that the Bible is anything more than a valuable moral and religious guide-book.

If this movement continues in its present direction, as undoubtedly it will, the Old Testament stories may entirely disappear from the reading world of the child. The public schools, which well might acquaint children with the beauties of the Hebrew literature, are not allowed to touch it except under the most stringent and confining regulations. Bible stories are almost universally omitted

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[1] Scribner's Magazine, 81:151-161. See also the American Mercury, 1:281.

from school lists of preferred reading. Even the custom of earlier readers, such as McGuffey's, to draw upon the Bible for selections has been largely discontinued . As for libraries, while one or two books of Bible stories, with perhaps a *Bible for Children* or a *Bible Story Retold for Children* may often be found on their shelves, it is a rare exception for any of the titles to be mentioned in their lists of recommended ''best books'' for children. The trend is unmistakable and gains momentum with every educational advance in the religious world.

If these stories are worth saving for the child, they must be rescued soon. The need is therefore acute for some sort of basic investigation which will say in definite and objective terms what value the stories actually have for children. This is what the present study has attempted to do.

Fortunately it found the way already prepared, and many techniques already perfected, which, it is true, had scarcely been thought of in connection with the Bible stories.[2] But they had proved their worth in other realms of literature. The task of analyzing literature in order to say of what stuff it is made is the old one of intelligent and tasteful criticism. People have engaged in it for generations, and have accumulated a fairly large body of principles by which it can be carried on. True, these exist largely in loose and disorganized form, subject to the whims and biases of personal judgments. But here again the author was fortunate. For a number of years the staff of the Institute of Character Research had been judging children's literature according to empirically derived standards and by methods which admitted of scientific verification. The mass of unformed and slippery criteria by which children's books are ordinarily selected had been fused and shaped into a tool of literary criticism which cut keenly and surely between the good and the bad, and which had stood the test of statistical reliability. The only task was to apply the technique to the Bible stories.[3]

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[2] The principles and certain of the devices employed in this study have been anticipated by a number of systematic inquiries into the teaching values of Biblical material. Such books as Betts' (*5, 6, 7*) and Bower's (*9*), and many graduate courses and seminars in religious education imply this approach. The application, however, has been haphazardly made, and often without a thorough appreciation of the radical departure from traditional standpoint which it demands. Even so incisive a study as Smith's report of current practice in using the Old Testament (*45*) flees in the end from the logic of its own data.

[3] Two volumes of a *Guide to Books for Character* have already been issued

A description of the procedure as it was adapted to the Old Testament narrative is given in the following chapter. The underlying principle, however, may be stated at once. In the past it has been taken for granted that the Bible stories to begin with are really valuable. Upon them has been erected a huge superstructure of textbooks, lesson helps, teacher's aids, Sunday School supplies, and so forth, without a serious question as to the soundness of the base itself. The point of this investigation, on the contrary, is to attack the fundamental question: what is the actual worth of each story, minus teacher helps and educational props? This is an observable and measurable quality. The same standards of excellence by which other literatures are judged should suffice to bring it to light, and it should yield to the same methods of measurement which establish the relative merits of other books and stories.

The study therefore submits the Old Testament stories to the rigorous conditions of unsupervised, free reading under which all stories are usually judged. It endeavors to state what a child of the appropriate age will discover in them from an intelligent reading. To the extent that it has succeeded, its judgments may be of assistance to the educator or the parent in assigning the Old Testament narrative with some degree of confidence to a proper place in the reading life of the child.

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as results of this larger project, and a third is now in preparation. The reader who wishes to become more familiar with the various phases of evaluating children's literature in general will find both published volumes of value (47). Special attention is called to the several chapters of the Introduction in each book.

The monograph, *Statistical Studies in the Judging of Children's Literature*, by Frank K. Shuttleworth, Iowa Studies in Character, Vol. II, No. 3 (40), is a more technical presentation.

CHAPTER II

THE READING PROCEDURE

The task of reading and evaluating the Old Testament stories was done in the workshop of the Institute of Character Research. The staff of trained literary critics who worked through the problem had been organized for the larger project—that of examining the whole world of children's literature, and preparing a select list of the best books and stories. The principle feature of the program was the reading of each selection by at least four of the staff, each of whom judged the selection for its literary merit, its suitability as child literature, and its possible character value.

1. The Staff of Readers

A word about the seven members of the staff who read the Old Testament stories. They had been appointed to the staff on the basis of their special training and natural ability in the field of literature, and because of considerable experience with children, either at home or in the classroom. Three or four had been members of the staff from the early beginnings of the larger program; the others had been working with the staff for over a year. At the beginning of this study, the group had just completed a three-years' survey of the world of fairy tale, myth and legend, and was thus steeped in literature peculiarly suited to the child.

Some of the staff were more familiar with Old Testament stories than were others. Four or five had lived with them from early childhood. One was an expert in religious education, had worked extensively in church schools, and was a skilled adapter of Bible stories for children. At the other extreme was the reader who in this study made his first acquaintance with many of the stories. This wide variation in acquaintance with the Hebrew tradition produced no measurable difference in judgment. Of the two readers least familiar with the Old Testament, one ranked the stories next to the lowest of the seven readers, while the other averaged next to the highest. This would indicate that non-familiarity with the material did not induce any particular prejudice for or against it.

The individual attitudes of each reader toward the Old Testa-

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ment stories were naturally quite varied. The staff had been selected long before the notion of judging the Old Testament stories was broached. A variety of response was expected, and indeed desired. One of the readers (Ne) was very harsh in her strictures against the material. Her average judgment ,however, was not appreciably lower than the group average. Two (Cl and Se) valued the stories quite highly, and were anxious to keep them for the child. Neither one of these, however, drew away from the group judgment when the actual quantitative measures were compared.[4]

2. The Reading Procedure

Each reader read and judged independently of the others. The data recorded included the following:

a. A *Classification* of the book or story according to its type, i.e., Bible story, Bible selection, Bible story retold, etc.[5]

b. A *grade*, and a range of grade, stating the most suitable year in which the story or book might profitably be given to the child.

c. A *rank of literary excellence,* rating the story on a scale of ten steps: 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0.

d. A statement of *situations* and *attitudes,* indicating the specific character value of the stories.

e. A *comment,* noting points which had influenced the reader in making his judgment, and characterizing the manner and the content of the particular story or book.

After the readers had made and recorded their individual judgments on these points, they gathered into conferences, at which judgments were discussed, disagreements on standards and viewpoints ironed out if possible, and revisions suggested where necessary. After the conferences the readers recorded whatever revisions they wished to make.[6] The individual record cards were gathered and the data summarized. Grades and ranks were averaged, situations summarized, and the comments combined into a statement

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[4] See Appendix III, Table 12, p. 63.

[5] The project was extended to include not only the stories in the King James version, but the many efforts to adapt them for the child as well. These are dealt with in a later chapter of the study.

[6] It should be carefully noted that the statistical calculations of this study are not based upon these revised rankings but upon the original judgments.

descriptive of the nature of the book or story. In this form the summary card went to the readers for final visa.

3.   Creating an Objective Basis for Judgment

The organic nature of the investigation for which this procedure was developed has perhaps been suggested. The stories were judged for what they actually contained; that is, for what an intelligent child of the appropriate age might get out of them in a period of unsupervised reading. This meant a strict disregard of all the supplementary material and interpetrations which have grown up around the Bible. In judging other kinds of literature, this requirement is too commonplace to be mentioned. But to apply the same principle to the stories of the Bible was revolutionary. In many cases, the interpretations which had grown up around a given story were so ingrained and deep-seated that they seemed a part of the living tissue of the story itself . It often meant a real conversion on the part of a reader to see a Bible story for what it actually was.

It was inevitable that this principle should smash rudely into the supposed character value of the stories. And in a sense it set up an artificial test that few stories are ever asked directly to meet. The child does not come to his moments of free reading with a mind empty of all preconceptions. He has been exposed to the influence of people whose business it is to pump him full of information and ideas. They teach him to find things in his readings that were not there at the previous moment, at least not there for him.

But there is a certain limit to this that is set by the basic strength of stories. They can carry only so much. It is not merely a question of honesty in interpretation but a question of the amount of energy that should be spent in scaffolding a story for an increasing load of moral values. The point is reached when the loss in artistry and effectiveness counterbalances the gain. Bible stories have suffered more of this than any other literature. They, especially, needed to be disciplined by a rigid application of the principle that a story's worth be measured along its base line.

4.   Placing the Stories in a Suitable Grade

One of the important steps in making this objective test was to determine the age at which a child could read and comprehend the story. The problem was more than a matter of reading skill and

informational equipment. To what period of physical and mental growth was the story most appropriate? How well would the story meet the demands of ripening instincts, maturing abilities, and enlarging interests? Is the child at the given age sufficiently mature to discriminate between the worth while and the unimportant elements?

The task had been fairly easy with the fairy tale, which is essentially child literature at its best. But to select from a narrative which was not written for the child in the first place those portions which a child might assimilate and to assign them to the proper years was another problem. Experts in the field of religious education have admitted the nature of the difficulty for years (Betts, 5, p. 28), but in practice they continued to follow the traditional custom of forcing upon children stories never meant for them: Bible material prescribed for the child before he has the requisite background for it; historical narrative that requires maturity of insight to understand shoved into the primary grades; virile story capable of appealing to vigorous and intelligent youths denatured for the kindergartner; simple tales burdened with layers of adult theologizing. As a result, the stories, as well as the modern versions which seek to adapt them for children, lack unity of purpose and manner. Style and story content clashed; the vocabulary often was too heavy for the story and too light for the underlying religous ideas.

The grade placements which the readers have recorded are therefore quite significant. They restore sanity to a situation in which the wildest vagaries have been allowed full play. It may be taken for granted that a grade, when attached to a given story, indicates the school year in which the child is master of sufficient reading skill to understand the story, and possesses the background and experience to profit from the story without the hothouse feeding to which Bible instruction is apt to resort.

In interpreting these grades, it should be understood that stories are usable over a range of years on either side of the preferred grade, and that in many cases the skilled story-teller can adapt them three or four years earlier than the indicated grade.

5. Ranking the Excellence of the Stories

For estimating the basic worth of the stories, a quantitative scale was used, consisting of ten levels of merit and demerit. The scale

had been devised by the members of the staff during several years of work in measuring the worth of children's literature. The first scale suggested in 1924 contained five levels of discrimination, labelled respectively, **, *, Accepted, Doubtful, and Rejected. The suitability of these denominations in preparing a list of the best books and stories is apparent. The "Rejected" stories were those unquestionably not worth including. Lying between this group and the Accepted level was the mass of writings whose defects of style, content, or make-up marred an otherwise acceptable possibility. The other two categories are self-explanatory.

After some judging the readers became aware that they were making much finer distinctions than these. About April, 1926, the scale was expanded into thirteen points, as follows: **†, **, **–, *†, *, *–, Ac†, Ac, Ac–, D†, D, D–, and Rej. It was this scale which the staff used during the preparation of the Fairy Tale Unit (47). Because of the few candidates which met the severe standards of the three highest steps in the scale, the three were massed as one in the final revision of the Unit for publication. The scale which the readers brought to the Bible project thus consisted of the following ten steps:

Readers' Scale	Scale used in this study	Scale used in published Guide
**†	9	**
**		
**–		
*†	8	*
*		
*–	7	A
Ac†	6	B
Ac	5	C
Ac–	4	D
D†	3	—
D	2	—
D–	1	—
Rej.	0	—

In the published bibliographies, the four lowest levels are of course omitted, since they represent material finally adjudged too inferior to recommend; and the six remaining steps are designated as in Column III above. In this study, for statistical purposes, the levels are designated by the numerals, as indicated in the second column above.

In a sense, these represent statistical rather than quantitative measures. The values are relative. On the whole, a story ranked "4" is better than one ranked "3" or "2," but it must not be concluded that it is twice as good as the "2." In fact, a story ranked "9" is probably infinitely superior to any "5" or "4" story, and the "0" story is often too poor for quantitative comparison. The measures are, however, amenable to statistical treatment, as will appear in the following chapter, and they do represent the possession in greater or less degree of the qualities of good literature.

Some very clear notion of what these qualities are, particularly with reference to literature for children, had been reached by the readers before they came to the Bible story project. The points were sufficiently definite to name and to describe in a compact statement. (See Appendix No. 1). They included the following: those literary elements that make for organic unity, craftsmanly detail, and emotional tone in writing; those factors that make a story effective for the child, such as forcefulness, appeal to basic instincts and drives, artistry in presentation, and truthfulness to the facts of nature and life; and the deeper-seated qualities by which literature exerts a permanent influence upon character. These latter are an appeal to the fundamental attitudes of unselfishness, courage, loyalty, integrity, and the like; and an ability to tempt the self towards a reorientation around larger and more spiritual ends.

The readers applied these standards to the Bible stories without essential modification. It is this approach which has given the readers such a leverage upon the worth of the Bible stories for character training. Heretofore, the character value of the stories had usually been stated in terms of their effect upon the child. What can this Bible story do for the child?—or do *to* the child? How may it be used to give the child a lesson in morality?—or to change a bad habit?—or to convert him to some new truth?—or to instill some desirable attitude?

The readers, however, simply asked of a story: What has it for the child? What storehouse of good things to appreciate and love does it open to the child? How easy and attractive does it make the road into that storehouse?—That is, what qualities does it possess as literature which will attract and hold the child's interest?

This difference in viewpoint is fundamental. The readers were constantly ranking stories low, stories which were reputed to have

high character value, simply because they were uninteresting or trivial or forbidding of themselves. It did not matter how useful they might prove as tools for drilling in desirable moral lessons. At the same time they were giving high ranks of excellence to stories which were graceful, imaginative, and full of zestful living and right feelings and delicate adjustments to conditions, but were too elusive for the moralist to handle. They preferred to let literature do its own work.

6. Classifying the Stories According to Moral Situations and Attitudes

As a last step in the analysis of these stories, the readers have endeavored to state just wherein the character value of each lies. To what particular realm of moral experience in the child's life does the story apply, and what adjustments in that realm might it influence the child to make, in terms of new motivations, attitudes, and acts?

This question the readers have answered in terms of "situations" and "attitudes." A "situation" may be defined as some set of conditions in a particular realm of experience which constitutes a field of operation for moral conduct. *Friends, Home, Self, Country, Beauty, God* are examples of "situations" to which responses must often be made that have ethical significance. *Loyalty* to Friends, *coöperative effort* in the Home, *confidence* in Self, *intelligent devotion* to Country, *responsiveness* to Beauty, and *trust* in God are examples of "attitudes."

No attempt was made to set up an *a priori* system of situations for the Bible stories. Here again they were to speak for themselves. The situations and attitudes were allowed to grow out of an actual analysis of the story content. Full use was made of the large list of situations and attitudes which had been formulated in the fairy tale project. But the stories were constantly developing new values for which only new terms were adequate. The situation "Jehovah" is a striking instance of this.

There was constant danger that the readers in their search for the specific values of the stories might fall into the trap that has tricked so many teachers of Bible stories. It is especially easy to read ethical meanings into Bible stories. That is the customary practice, a temptation hard to resist, a habit difficult to break.

But the readers set themselves two definite restrictions which held

them true to the content of the stories, conditions which the situations chosen for each particular story must meet.

a. The "situation" must actually be present in the story, and must be of central importance. A situation should be listed only when the incidents of the story actually work toward a clear-cut, quickly recognizable moral problem in the realm of the situation.

b. The "attitudes" exemplified by the story should be vital, unambiguous, and morally valuable. They should be such as the present-day child would understand, and could emulate in his own conduct. It were better not to list an "attitude" at all than to record a type of conduct on the part of a Bible character which negates the ideals of right living held important today.[7]

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[7] The use of the ethical "situation" and attendant "attitudes" to express the character value of literature is in line with the most recent practice in character education. Attention used to be directed to the virtues. Moral education consisted in teaching these to children.

Virtues are too vague and intangible for scientific study. The "situation," the complex of conditions which "set" the moral problem, is definite, describable, and handle-able. When moral conduct is referred to a situation, it can be studied in terms of specific habits of response, whether attitudes or acts. (See E. D. Starbuck, The Iowa Plan (48); W. W. Charters, The Teaching of Ideals (14); May and Hartshorne, Studies in Deceit, and others.)

CHAPTER III

LITERARY QUALITY, GRADE PLACEMENT AND ETHICAL VALUE OF SIXTY-THREE OLD TESTAMENT STORIES

1. Selecting the Stories

While the first half of the Old Testament is narrative in form, the story is not always continuous nor well-organized. It often separates into two or three strands, parallel accounts of the same incident. Extraneous material abounds, such as law codes, genealogical tables, historical or ethnological notes, poetry, oration, and so on. Time and again the thread of the story becomes so twisted that it is altogether lost in a tangle of documents and annotations.

To judge this conglomerate as a whole was clearly out of the question, and in fact unnecessary. For generations Sunday Schools and teachers had been accustomed to lift out certain sections that were wholly narrative in manner, and had used them as if they were complete and independent stories. This was sufficient justification for accepting the traditional divisions for the most part.

Accordingly, those stories were selected for judging which were most commonly used in Sunday School courses. At this point the author was able to draw upon a recent study of current curricula in religious schools, which enumerated the portions of the Old Testament used in six of the more recent graded courses for church schools.[8] They had appeared since 1906 under the influence of the movement towards a more child-centered program of religious edu-

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[8] R. S. Smith, *A Critical Evaluation of the Use of Old Testament Material in Current Graded Curricula of Religious Education.* Yale doctorate Thesis, 1927. Since published under the title: *The Use of the Old Testament in Current Curricula,* Century, 1929. (*45*)

The author is greatly indebted to this study, not only for data used here and elsewhere in the monograph, but also for valuable insights and stimulation. It is easily the best survey and criticism of the present-day use of Old Testament material in religious education.

The six courses mentioned above are as follows:

The International Graded Series
The Constructive Series in Religion
The Completely Graded Series
The Beacon Course in Religious Education
The Christian Nurture Series
The Abingdon Week-day Religious Education Tests

cation, and had gained considerable recognition as courses which selected for the child the more suitable and worthwhile portions.

Seventy-six passages from the Old Testament stories were used one or more times in these six curricula.[9] Sixty-two of these were chosen by the author for consideration. Of the fourteen not included, four were too fragmentary or disjointed to judge as literature; the rest were omitted because their average occurrence in the six courses was less than one. In many cases the exact passage selected for consideration was a few verses shorter or longer than the reference given in Smith's study.[10] The writer used his own judgment in selecting enough verses to round out the passage as far as possible into a unified and coherent story; in every case the addition or subtraction was designed to give the story a better chance for a higher ranking.

The stories were given to seven readers of the staff, including the writer, who read and ranked them according to the standards and procedures already described. Their judgments included a *rank* of literary excellence for each story, a preferred *grade,* and a set of *situations,* (see Table 1),[11] besides comments and other qualitative data not presented in this monograph.

Table No. 1

STAFF RATINGS OF 63 OLD TESTAMENT STORIES WITH RANKS, GRADES, AND SITUATIONS

Story	Rank[1]	Grade	Situations	Freq.[2]
Ruth	5	X	Friends	21
The creation	4	V·	Tradition	14
David and Goliath	4	VI	Achievement, God	18
Joseph Cycle	4	VII	Family, Brothers, Difficulty	75
Nehemiah the builder	4	VIII	Achievement	25
Abraham offering Isaac	4	Ad.	Principle, Religious Values	9
Joseph making self known	3	V	Family-Brothers, Enemies	14

[9] See original study (*4*), Appendix Table 1, for titles and references.

[10] Smith's references were meant to be only approximations. See *45*: p. 335, note to Appendix.

[11] In Appendix II, Table No. 9, will be found the ranks given by each member of the staff for each of the Old Testament stories judged.

[1] On a 10-point scale of excellence: 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. In the published volumes of the Guide this scale is transliterated: **, *, A, B, C, D. No stories or books which rank below D (that is, 3, 2, 1, or 0) have been or will be listed in the published volumes. This means that out of the present list only the first six stories will appear in the Guide.

[2] Frequency with which these stories appear in six current graded curricula in religious education.

Table No. 1 (continued)

Story	Rank	Grade	Situations	Freq.
Abraham and Lot	3	VI	Others	18
Daniel in furnace	3	VI	Principle-Ideals	8
Daniel in lion's den	3	VI	Principle, Prayer	13
Manna and quails	3	VI	Providence	8
Noah's Ark	3	VI	Tradition	13
David and Jonathan	3	VII	Friends	20
David spares Saul	3	VII	Enemies	14
Jacob's return	3	VII	Family-Brothers, Wrong-done-one	3
Healing of Naaman	3	VII	Self	16
David and Abigail	3	VIII	Difficulty	10
Josiah's reform	3	VIII	Principle	16
Rebekah at the well	3	VIII	Tradition	9
Samuel and Eli	3	VIII	Jehovah	26
Solomon builds temple	3	VIII	Achievement, Divine, Others	14
Ten commandments	3	VIII	Authority-Jehovah Tradition	28
The Red Sea	3	VIII	Jehovah, Tradition	19
Joshua's conquest, Canaan	3	IX	Tradition-History	16
Solomon's kingship	3	IX	Tradition-History	11
Joshua's farewell	3	IX	Principle	16
Jonah	3		Others	14
Moses in basket boat	2	IV		25
Daniel refusing food	2	VI		10
Jacob's dream	2	VI		14
Joseph and famine	2	VI		7
Joseph caring for father	2	VI		13
Joseph testing brothers	2	VI		7
David and Absalom	2	VII	Father-Son	5
David plays for Saul	2	VII		8
David, the shepherd boy	2	VII		22
Gideon	2	VII		15
Esther	2	VIII		9
Jeremiah writes a book	2	IX	Authority-Jehovah	8
Abraham and angels	2		Others	7
Death of Saul	2			7
Division of kingdom	2			11
Elijah rebukes Ahab	2			15
Elisha at woman's house	2		Others	8
Garden of Eden	2			12
Moses' call	2		Jehovah	17
Moses' death	2			6
Samson	2		Self	7
Samuel and Hannah	2		Jehovah	14
Saul made king	2			16
The still small voice	2			9
Brothers selling Joseph	1	VI		15

Table No. 1 (continued)

Story	Rank	Grade	Situations	Freq.
Joseph and butler	1	VI		5
Joseph and coat	1	VI		14
The plagues	1	VI		11
Deborah and Barak	1	VIII		12
Ezra's prayer	1	X	Evil-doing	7
Report of spies	1	X	Authority	7
Abraham's adventure	1		Jehovah	17
Elijah at Brook Cherith	1			12
Jacob cheating Esau	1			8
The passover	1		Tradition	11
Elijah at Carmel	0	IX		18

2. Literary Quality

From the preceding table it may be seen that the readers have ranked the stories very low from the standpoint of literary quality. One is given the lowest rank possible; 11 are ranked ''1''; 25 are ranked ''2'', and 20 ''3''. Only six of the sixty-three stories were judged ''4'' or better; that is, of sufficient merit to be listed in a bibliography of choice reading for children.

To appreciate the significance of these rankings it is only necessary to keep in mind the setting of the study. The persons who did the reading and judging had just finished a three-year process of evaluating stories peculiarly suited to the child, a literature in which they encountered the extremest ranges of quality, from the wretched illiteracy of some rehashed fairy tales to the delicate art of Anatole France. The readers' heads were full of the magic and charm of folk-lore, myth, and legend, as transcribed by many artist-writers. If the best stories in the Old Testament are ranked no higher than ''4'' or ''5'', that means that they do not possess the literary quality which many other children's stories have. If the most of the Old Testament narrative has drifted to the lowest levels of mediocrity (''3'', ''2'', ''1'', or ''0'') that is because they are no better than hosts of other stories which had already been rejected.

The situation is concretely illustrated in the accompanying graph (Figure 1), which compares on a percentage basis the number of Bible stories and the number of fairy tales ranked in each level of merit, respectively. Out of 3515 fairy tales judged for Volume I of the Guide (47), 22 per cent proved acceptable as against 9.4 per cent of the Bible stories. Six per cent of them (211 stories, or more

Figure No. 1

Distribution of Ranks
on 63 Old Testament Stories
and on 3515 Fairy Tales, Myths, and Legends
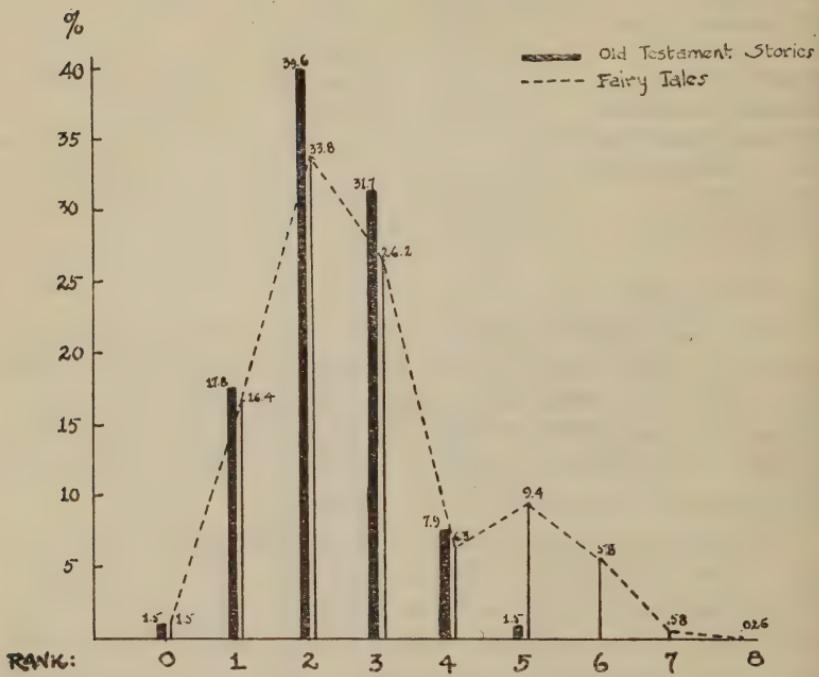
RANK:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Number of O. T. stories:	1	11	25	20	5	1	0	0	0
Number of Fairy Tales:	53	574	1176	929	220	330	159	65	9

Note: All stories ranked ''4'' or better are listed, or will be listed, in appropriate volumes of *The Guide to Literature for Character Training* (47). None appear which rank below ''4''.

The total number of stories from the fairy tale unit which ranked below ''4'' was 2732; however, the distribution of these stories among the four individual steps (''0'', ''1'', ''2'', and ''3'') was not available. The writer therefore estimated these to conform to the distribution of the Bible stories in the same levels. The argument is not affected since it is not concerned with the exact number of stories that happened to occupy each step of *demerit*. The inference is clear that if the Bible stories were as excellent as the Fairy Tales, the distribution should correspond in the upper levels of the scale as well as in the lower.

than three times the total number of Bible stories judged) were ranked higher than any of the Old Testament stories. From every other point also, the Old Testament narrative suffers in comparison. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the Bible stories are either too adult or too inferior in the King James Version for children to read.

The readers were as one in reaching this conclusion. The evidence for this appears not only in the reliability correlations between the readers, which range from .455 to .693, and in the Reliability R of .814, but in the errors of estimate which predict the shifts that might be expected from another staff of readers.[12] The correlations themselves are large, considering the restricted use of the scale (only one story averaging as high as ''6''), and the small number of cases involved. But the errors of estimate are decisive. They justify the inference that a combination of seven other readers might at best raise five or six of the ''3'' stories and one or two of the ''2'' stories to ''4'' or ''5''. In no case would any of the stories rank higher than ''6''. In other words, another set of judges, ranking the stories according to the same principles and procedures, would not seriously shift the position of the stories relative to each other or to the line of inclusion and exclusion.

The validity of the principle and methods by which the above conclusions were obtained is not a matter that can be settled at the present by statistical investigation. Is it possible that these judgments are merely products of a special bias shared by the whole staff? To test this hypothesis would involve the use of independent criteria against which to compare the rankings of the staff. Unfortunately nothing of this sort exists, except general statements from various sources as to the relative excellence of the Old Testament narrative. The stories appeared so uniformly poor to the readers that it was statistically impossible even to validate by outside opinion the order in which they ranked the stories. The probable errors involved in a quantitative measure using only four steps of a scale are too large for solid inferences to be drawn.

Nevertheless, a number of pieces of evidence indicate that these judgments are essentially correct. The frequency with which each story appeared in six of the current graded courses in religious education was available for purposes of comparison (see last column, Table 1). The correlation between the ranks of excellence given the sixty-three stories and the number of times each was used in these courses was .548 $\pm$ .06. This corre lation is as high as the correlations between the readers. As far as the *order* of excellence in which the stories are ranked is concerned, the popularity of the

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[12] For statistical details, see Appendix III, p. 82.

stories in graded courses corresponds rather closely to the staff ratings.

In addition, the rapidity with which other materials have been shoving the Old Testament out of church school curricula of the better type, even to the point of displacing it altogether, and the guarded but radical criticisms of Old Testament materials, which occur on many pages of text-books in religious education, corroborate the judgments of the staff.

3. Grade Placement

A considerable divergence from the general opinion as to the age when the Old Testament stories in the original can best be given to children is indicated by the grade placements. (Table No. 1, Column II). Not only has the average grade level been raised from the primary to the adolescent years, but a good many of the stories were left entirely ungraded as unsuitable in any child year. The situation is apparent at a glance in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Distribution of Grade Placements
63 Old Testament Stories
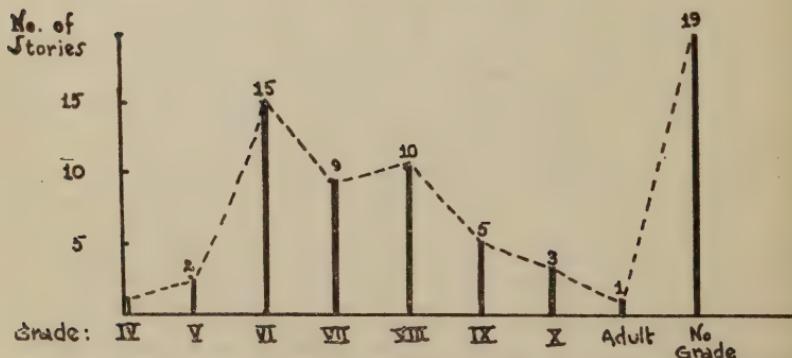
1. *17 Stories Not Graded.* The readers' gradings on seventeen of the stories could not be averaged. In the case of a ''3'' story, Jonah, the disagreement was so large that an average would have misrepresented the actual state of affairs. In all other cases, the stories were either so poor that the readers did not trouble to list a grade or the discrepancy between content and style was so great that a grade placement would have been meaningless.

2. *No Stories Listed for the Primary Years.* No story has been placed lower than the fourth grade. This is in striking contrast to

the general practice in religious education. It is true that most of
the newer texts have taken the difficult stories of historical narra-
tive out of the primary years. But certain of the Old Testament
favorites are still regarded as especially suitable for the child of
the pre-school and the early grades. They include the story of
Moses in the Basket Boat (placed by the readers in the fourth
grade), David and Goliath (VI), Noah's Ark (VI), the Daniel
stories (VI), Joseph's Coat (VI), David the Shepherd Boy (VII),
and Samuel and Eli (VIII). The readers are sure that these stories
should not be used in their Biblical form much before the fourth
year in school. As they stand, a younger child can not read or ap-
preciate them.

3. *General Average of Grade Level Shifted to the Adolescent
Years*. This again runs counter to the prevailing usage. The child
is ordinarily introduced to the whole of the Old Testament narrative
at the age of ten years. This is usually done with the aid of a
teacher who tells the stories to the children, but the child is expected
to read them in the Bible also. According to the readers, even the
better and more interesting stories should be saved for the later
years. The child is not ready to read the Bible extensively until he
arrives at the years when he also begins to become interested in the
traditional histories of other peoples.

4. *Validation*. The problem of validating the grade placements
of the readers proved difficult. There were no outside criteria
against which to check. In the field of the fairy tale, a great many
librarians' lists and lists of recommended school reading were avail-
able. But nothing like these could be found in the field of religious
education. The author had hoped to discover in the better Sunday
School curricula some definite agreement in assignments of certain
Bible stories to appropriate years. With this in mind, the years in
which each of the sixty-three stories were placed by the six graded
courses previously mentioned were collated from Smith's figures
(*45*: pp. 83, 84, 121, 122, 170, 171, 212, 249, 250, 295, 296). The
results were disappointing (see Appendix II, Table No. 10). An
examination of the table will show how impossible it is to discover
any specific grade placements in even the better Sunday School
curricula. Each story scatters over a wide range of years. In
most cases there is not even a modal grade. Beyond a vague drift
of certain stories, already mentioned, towards the pre-school period,

and a slight tendency of certain of the more complicated historical
narratives to get into the upper years, nothing can be noted.

The grade placements of the readers represent pioneer work. No
one has ever before tried to say frankly and with thoroughness to
what particular age a particular section of the Old Testament is
best suited.[13] There have been hints in that direction, and earnest
endeavors to feel out a practical way to adapt Bible materials to
the child. But none of them have furnished any data of an ob-
jective sort. Until more reliable criteria appear, the validity of
these grade placements must be determined upon the basis of the
rightness of the standards according to which they have been made,
and a common-sense analysis of the elements in a particular piece
of literature which determine its minimum and maximum grade-
years.

4. Classification According to Ethical Situations

As explained in the preceding chapter, a ''situations'' classifica-
tion was used by the readers to indicate the specific character value
of each story. The situations located the vital points at which the
story had something of value to give to the child in the way of right
feelings and attitudes. The relevant data have already been pre-
sented (Table 1). Altogether, the readers recorded twenty different
situations in connection with the sixty-three stories. They are listed
in the accompanying table, with the number of times each was used.

Table No. 2

LIST OF SITUATIONS RECORDED
BY STAFF ON 63 OLD TESTAMENT STORIES

Situation	No. times recorded	Situation	No. times recorded
Achievement	3	Jehovah	6
Authority	1	Others	5
Authority-Jehovah	2	Principles	5
Difficulty	1	Self	2
Enemies	2	Tradition	6
Family	1	Tradition-History	2
Family-Brothers	3	Wrong-doing	1
Father-Son	1	Wrong-done-one	1
Friends	2	Providence	1
God, the Divine	2	Religious Values	1

[13] The earliest study, so far as the author knows, to apply such a criterion to
Biblical material is that by S. P. Franklin (*23*). See also Case (*13*), and
Reusser (*39*).

Four important conclusions may be drawn from the two tables:

1. No Situations Recorded for 25 of the Stories. In twenty-five instances, the readers either refused to list any situations, or failed to agree. Seventeen of these stories are ranked "2", seven "1", and one "0". In other words, they are poor stories. Stories that rank so low may be altogether devoid of "situation" content; or they may be too poor from a literary standpoint to warrant classifying. The two conditions usually accompany each other. In fact, in most of these twenty-five stories, the impossibility of obtaining clean-cut and valuable situations was possibly the chief reason for the low rank of the story as to literary quality.

2. Less than Two Situations Recorded for any of the Remaining Stories. Counting repetitions, the readers used only 48 situations in connection with the other 38 stories. This is an extraordinarily meagre list, alongside the many values regularly found in these stories by Bible textbooks and teachers.[14] It is poor, too, alongside the rich offering of the fairy tale unit.[15] The stories which are recommended there average two and three situations apiece. In comparison, the Bible stories, generally thought to be full of vital ethical teachings, fail to measure up to what one would ordinarily expect of a reasonably good story.

3. Stories Weak in Religious Values. The third fact one gathers from the data is that the Old Testament stories have comparatively little to offer in the way of nourishing the religious life of the child. The situation, *Religious Values,* is used only once. *God* appears twice, and *Providence* once. The only other specifically religious

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[14] The following list of lessons derived from the stories of Jacob Cheating Esau and Jacob's Dream by reputable Sunday School courses is a typical sample:

It isn't necessary to cheat; God'll give it to you anyhow; wait for Him to get it for you.

Esau should have taken his punishment like a man.

Always battle manfully against your sins.

Don't be a pagan, or an atheist.

Have ideals.

Don't waste time in school, nor neglect your duties as a good citizen, nor fail to go to church.

A person doesn't appreciate the good things at home until he has to go away.

Don't forget that the church needs money.

Jesus is our Ladder to heaven.

Don't smoke.

Do your duty; that is best.

Leave unto the Lord the rest.

[15] See Book List, or Situations Index in Volume I of the *Guide* (*47*).

situation, *Jehovah,* definitely ties the religious value a child might receive from the story to an ancient conception of God. The stories for which this situation is recorded are of traditional rather than of spiritual significance.

4. All of the Stories have Value as Hebrew Tradition. The situation, *Tradition,* has been specifically recorded in connection with only eight of the stories. The readers, however, in classifying the stories as to type, carefully stated that all of them possess some significance as traditional tales of the Hebrew people. Following the practice of the fairy tale unit, the stories that are of sufficient merit to be included in a volume of the Guide will be listed under *Tradition* as well as under their own situations. This is to recognize the fact that stories, worth little in their own right, may be quite valuable as typical parts of the literature of another age and people.

As a whole, then, the stories fail to reveal any large amount of character value under the procedures used by the readers. More than one-third of the stories are left altogether without situations, and only one situation is recorded for most of the others. From the standpoint of religious value they are also weak. In general, the narratives possess the same significance as similar stories of other early peoples.

5. Validity of the Classification by Situations

An objective test of the validity of these results, which wipe out most of the supposed character value of the Old Testament stories, proved difficult to set up in such a way as to yield quantitative data. Nevertheless, various attempts to use the judgments of groups of outside readers yielded some significant data.

1. Situations Recorded by Two Classes on Twenty Old Testament Stories. Two graduate-undergraduate classes in religion and character education were given a number of the more important Old Testament stories already ranked by the readers of the staff, and were asked to record situations for them. Both classes were given a list of situations from which to work. One of the classes received in addition a set of definitions stating the meaning which the readers of the staff attached to each situation.[16]

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[16] For this material see original study (*4,* Exhibit E) or Volume I of the *Guide* (*47,* Situations List, pp. 209 ff.)

A summary of the results appear in the following table:

Table No. 3

Number of Situations Recorded by Two University Classes
on 20 Old Testament Stories

	Class in Religion	Class in Char. Education
Number in class	18	12-15
Total number situations given	40	48
Total number situations used	40	45
Average number situation by class per story	23.8	16.5
Average number individuals recording same situation on same story	2.88	2.28
Average per cent of group recording same situation on same story	16	19

Both classes reveal the same tendency to record a large number of situations on each story. One class used every situation given to it at least once; the other omitted but three. The class in Religions averaged 23.8 situations *per story*. The other class was more discriminating, due most likely to the definitions which had been placed in its hands. Still, it averaged 16.5 situations *per story*. The average agreement, of course, is low.

At the same time, a large degree of agreement upon the major situations for certain stories appeared. The situations recorded for a particular story by a third or more of the two classes are listed in the accompanying table (Table No 4), together with the situations recorded on the same stories by the readers of the staff. It will be

Table No 4

Situations Recorded on 20 Old Testament Stories
by at least One-Third of the Members of Two
University Classes

Story	No of Readers	Situations Recorded	Freq	Staff Recordings
The Creation	14	God	14	Tradition
		Achievement	9	
Abraham's Adventure	18	Adventure	7	Jehovah
		Opportunity	7	
Abraham and Lot	18	Justice	6	Others
Sacrifice of Isaac	14	Duty	8	Principle, Religious Values
Isaac and Rebekah	15	Duty	7	Tradition
Joseph Cycle	12	Parents	9	Family-Brothers
		Family	8	

Table No. 4 (continued)

Story	No of Readers	Situations Recorder	Freq	Staff Recordings
Moses in Basket Boat	18	Family	10	None
		Parents	7	
		Danger	6	
Red Sea	32	Danger	20	Jehovah
		God	16	Tradition
Conquest of Canaan	14	Adventure	7	Tradition-History
		Achievement	6	
Ruth	32	Family	19	Friends
		Friends-Companion	13	
		Romance	14	
Samuel and Eli	18	Duty	13	Jehovah
		Authority	10	
		Consequences	9	
		God	7	
David and Goliath	32	Adventure	19	Achievement
		Achievement	14	God
		Enemies	12	
David and Jonathan	18	Friends	12	Friends
		Danger	12	
		Enemies	7	
Elijah at Mt Carmel	18	God	8	None
		Religious values	7	
Healing of Naaman	12	Adventure	5	Self
		Unfortunates	5	
Josiah's Reform	15	Consequences	6	Principle
Nehemiah	32	Achievement	24	Achievement
Esther	14	Achievement	8	None
Jonah	14	Adventure	8	Others
		Temptation	6	
		Consequences	5	
		Danger	5	
Daniel in Lion's Den	14	Danger	7	Principle
		Emergency	5	Jehovah

seen from this table that at least fifty per cent of the class have agreed upon twenty situations.

The agreement with the staff designations is not so large. The readers have recorded no situations at all for two of the stories. For the remaining eight, eight of the situations recorded by the students agree with those recorded by the staff. Other real agreements are hidden by differences in understanding the purpose of the situation classification and the terms of specific situations. *Duty* and *Principle,* for example, under the story of Abraham Sacrificing

Isaac coalesce. The readers and the students likewise have the same thought in mind in connection with the story of Abraham and Lot, although they use the situations, *Others* and *Justice,* respectively. In class discussion at the time, *Duty* and *Authority,* recorded for story of Samuel and Eli, resolved themselves into the situation, *Jehovah,* as used by the readers. *Danger* is listed three times, not as a real ''situation,'' involving character, but for the purpose of pointing out a central element in the plot of the story, a natural mistake on the part of inexpert readers.

One other point of agreement developed. The author, in directing the experiment, called special attention to the situation, *Religious Values,* and requested that it be used not only in its own right but whenever there was any danger that some deeper value in a story might otherwise escape recording. In spite of this, the situations denoting distinctively religious values are conspicuous by their absence. *God* appears three times, but only once by a majority of the class. *Religious Values* is listed twice, each time by less than half the class.

2. *Situations Recorded by a Graduate Student in Religious Education.* A graduate major (st) in religion and character education, who was interested in the study although unconnected with the project, consented to classify the same stories according to situations. He had been a professor of religious education in an Iowa college for a number of years, was well versed in Biblical scholarship, and had written largely on the religious training of the young. He was given the same list of situations that the class in Character Education had used, and followed the same procedure.

As was to be expected, his use of the classification was much more discriminating than that of the student classes. He found need for only twenty-five of the forty-eight situations in the list, and was doubtful about six of these. In addition, the average number of situations which he listed for each story was 3.88 (3.26, excluding those marked ''questionable''), compared with the class averages of 23.8 and 16.5. This figure, in fact, closely approximates that of the staff, individual readers listing on an average three situations for every story.

At the same time, the amount of agreement between his list of situations and that of the readers is large. The accompanying table (Table No. 5) records the complete data, with the staff situations on the same stories. *St* has listed Tradition for every story. This,

Table No. 5

Situations Recorded on 20 Old Testament Stories
by a Graduate Student in Religious Education

Story	Situations*	Staff Recordings
The Creation	*Tradition,* Providence, Religious Values (?)	Tradition
Abraham and Lot	*Principle,* Competitors, Wrong-doing	Others
Abraham and Isaac	*Values,* Tradition, Duty (?)	Principle Religious Values
Rebekah at the well	Tradition, Romance (?)	Tradition
Joseph Cycle	*Difficulty,* Family, Danger Tradition, Wrong-doing Principle (?)	Family-brothers Difficulty
Moses in basket boat	*Emergency,* Tradition, Danger (?)	
The Red Sea	*Adventure,* Tradition, Providence (?)	Tradition Jehovah
Conquest of Caanan	*Tradition,* Adventure, Providence (?)	Tradition-History
Ruth	*Companions,* Difficulty, Tradition, Beauty	Friends
The boy Samuel	Providence, Consequences (?)	Jehovah
David and Goliath	*Adventure,* Tradition	Achievement, God
David and Jonathan	*Friends,* Enemies, Tradition	Friends
Elijah at Mt. Carmel	Duty, Tradition	
Healing of Naaman	Providence (?), Unfortunates (?)	Self
Josiah's reform	*Tradition,* Authority (?), Institutions (?)	Principle
Nehemiah	*Achievement,*Difficulty, Adventure, Tradition	Achievement
Esther	Adventure, Danger, Difficulty	
Jonah	Others, Duty, Values	Others
The fiery furnace	*Ideals,* Duty, Adventure, Romance (?)	Principle-ideals
Daniel in lion's den	*Duty,* Principle (?), Consequences (?), Adventure	Principle Jehovah

* Situations italicized were recorded as ''particularly appropriate.''

as the reader will recall, is exactly in accord with the judgments of the staff readers. Including this situation then, there are 32 agreements altogether. *St* also underlined the situations which seemed to him outstanding, fourteen in all. Of these, two are found with stories for which the readers have listed none, two differ from the readers' designations, and the remaining ten are the same.

3. Situations Devised for Old Testament Stories by a Class in the Moral Values of Literature. In order to set up a purely experimental situation, a class in the Moral Values of Children's Literature was organized into a research group, and the problem of designating the specific values of stories for character was proposed for investigation. The group really constituted a parallel but quite independent set of literary critics who were allowed to develop their own standards and techniques. The situations-attitudes device was worked out and tried on a number of fairy stories. Then the Old Testament stories were introduced, and the class proceeded to devise their own sets of situations from the stories.

The time was too short for the class to perfect the method or to achieve any real skill in its use. Still the results were suggestive. There were six people in the class, and they read ten of the Old Testament stories. In their eagerness to find situations, they recorded an average of fourteen for each story, quite excelling in their zeal the thirty individuals of the Religions Class who averaged 23.5, and the fifteen individuals of the class in Character Education who averaged 16.2. This is easy to understand. The six readers were exploring stories and naming situations as they went, while the previous groups were doing the more limited task of choosing them from a given list. The occurrence of such terms as ''Dreams'', ''Interest'', ''Courage'' and ''Service'', recorded by the class as situations, shows how new the device was and how imperfectly it was developed.

Notwithstanding, the six showed a much higher degree of agreement among themselves than did the previous groups. The average number listing a given situation for the *same* story was 1.79, practically two out of six; whereas in the Religions class only 3 out of 18, and in the Character Education group only 3 out of 15 recorded the same situation for the same story. This increase in agreement indicates that with time and experience any group of cultured readers could do as reliable a job as the readers of the staff have done.

At the same time, the six members of the group were agreeing in some detail with the staff listings. The accompanying table (Table No. 6), which contains all the situations recorded by at least three members of the class, indicates this. Out of the 21 situations listed by the staff, 17 were also recorded by one or more members of the class, although only 6 of these were noted by three or more. On

Table No. 6

Situations Recorded Most Frequently on 10 Old Testament Stories
by Six Readers in a Class in Children's Literature

Story	Total No. Sit.	No. Diff. Sit. Used	Situations	Times Listed	Situation-Staff
The Creation	20	16	Authority	3	Tradition
			God	2	
			Tradition	1	
Joseph*	31	16	Consequences	5	Family-Brothers
			Adventure	4	Difficulty
			Family	4	Tradition
			Difficulty	1	
Red Sea	27	16	Achievement	4	Jehovah
			Danger	3	Tradition
			Adversity	3	
			Tradition	1	
			God	1	
Ruth*	22	11	Tradition	5	Friends
			Mother-in-law	3	Tradition
			Work	3	
			Jehovah-God	3	
			Friends	1	
Boy Samuel*	23	9	God-Jehovah	4	Jehovah
			Duty	4	Tradition
			Home	4	
			Desire	3	
David and Goliath	27	14	Achievement	5	Achievement
			Adventure	3	God
			Danger	3	Tradition
			Tradition	3	
			God	2	
Naaman	30	15	Consequences	6	Self
			Values	3	Tradition
			Self	3	
			Tradition	1	
Nehemiah	19	13	Work	3	Achievement
			Achievement	2	Tradition
Jonah	25	16	Difficulty	3	Others
			God-Jehovah	3	Tradition
			Others	1	
Fiery Furnace	26	14	Danger	4	Principle-
			Authority	3	Ideals
			Duty, Ideals	2	Tradition
			Tradition	2	

* Discussed in class.

the other hand, the staff readers failed to use a total of 24 situations which at least three members of this group felt to be present in the stories. Many of these would undoubtedly not have been listed had the group also considered their effectiveness and moral worth, as the readers of the staff were required to do. Nevertheless, the data does not warrant the conclusion that the situations listed by the readers represent the only possible values in the stories.

4. Summary. In contrast with the meagre list of situations recorded by the readers for the Old Testament stories is the huge mass of moral lessons and spiritual truths taught from the stories by Sunday School textbooks and teachers. Which is a correct picture? The data just presented warrant the following conclusions:

a. The tendency to discover many moral values in the Old Testament stories is widespread. Students in college classes average from 14 to 24 per story. Name any situation and they will find it in some Bible story.

b. There is, however, very little agreement as to the values in a given story; only three out of 15-18 students pick the same situation for the same story.

c. Any literary training or analytical device (such as a situations-technique) which increases one's ability to discriminate, decreases the number of values one will find in a Bible story, and also increases the chances of agreement with others. Even the mere addition of a set of definitions to the list of situations raised the per cent of people agreeing on a situation from 16 to 20, and noticeably decreased the number of situations recorded. The specialized training in the Bible and in child psychology possessed by the graduate student, *St*, and the special techniques developed by the class in Literature for Character each resulted in lessening the number of values discovered in a Bible story and in proportionately increasing the agreement with the staff judgments. Since this is in direct contradiction to the statistical expectation that the fewer the number of chances used the less the probable agreement, it is quite evident that the readers have come pretty close to the real values of the stories.

d. Such analysis brings increasingly to the fore the situation, *Tradition,* as the chief and all-pervasive value of the Old Testament

stories.   The agreement on this point between St and the staff is the most striking evidence of this.

e.   The specific religious values in the stories are few.   On this point, all the experimental groups are in agreement with the readers.

f.   While it can not be claimed that the specific situations listed by the staff are validated to the exclusion of all others, yet the incidence of agreement is large enough and the direction towards which the data point is sufficiently clear to warrant the inference that the situations listed by the readers come close to locating the basic values of the stories.

CHAPTER IV

LITERARY QUALITY, GRADE PLACEMENT, AND ETHICAL VALUE OF BOOKS OF OLD TESTAMENT STORIES FOR CHILDREN

Up to this point the study has been confined to the Old Testament stories in their original form. This restriction was accepted for the moment on the assumption that the best efforts of adapter and teacher to rework a story are limited by the intrinsic or basic worth of the original. To measure what is there to begin with is to measure the most essential factor in the value of any subsequent elaboration.

Obviously, this assumption is only partially true. If the imagination of the artist is allowed complete freedom to recreate an old and ugly or trivial story into a new and beautiful one, then it is a travesty of criticism to measure the new story in terms of the old. If, on the other hand, the bonds of traditional reverence bind the writer so slavishly to the original that he repeats and accentuates its defects, basic measures such as we have just made are of unquestionable importance.

It is time, therefore, to extend the scope of the study to take in the story teller and the teacher of religion, for purposes of examination and judgment. A Bible story in the raw and a Bible story as transformed by a skilled and graceful teacher may be two entirely different things. It is true without a doubt that the Old Testament stories have continued so long as the mainstay of religious and moral training chiefly because of the success which countless parents and teachers have had in adapting and interpreting them to the child mind. And although the fiction still widely persists that the Bible in its original form is proper pabulum for children, nevertheless the extensive machinery of religious education is largely concerned with transforming the intractible material into suitable form.

Unfortunately, most of the skillful work of this sort is not recoverable for a study of this kind. There is no way to standardize and measure what a trained and spiritually minded teacher can do in person with these tales—even perhaps with such a story as

Jephtha and his daughter. The great mass of textbooks written for the purpose are merely skeleton manuals, upon which flesh must be put, and are therefore outside the scope of this study.

There are, however, a number of volumes which endeavor to put the Bible into a form more attractive and suitable for the child to read. These adaptations represent *literary* attempts to bridge the gap between the Bible and the child. To evaluate them is perhaps of even more importance than to measure the original stories themselves. (Betts, *5*, pp. 330-1)

1. Reading Procedure

Through the courtesy of many publishing houses, a large number of books of this sort were assembled for examination. In all, some two hundred and fifty books came into the workshop of the Institute, one hundred of which contained Old Testament material. They were put through essentially the same process of reading that has already been described. (See Chapter II). Three members of the staff (Ba, Cl, and Ne) and the author (Be) did the bulk of the reading. One other member (Se) helped in a short survey of Sunday School textbooks which happened to contain retellings of Bible stories. On one book, two additional readers (Sm and Ve) contributed judgments.

The first fifty books in the project were judged by at least three of the readers, a large number of them by all four. A summary of the data on these books revealed so close an agreement among the ratings that is appeared statistically justifiable to determine the rank of all books still waiting to be judged by the ratings of two readers if their ranks averaged "2" or lower. A few of the later books were therefore judged by two readers only. In six other cases, the author himself determined the final disposition of the book, after a brief examination and recommendation by two of the other readers. This chapter, however, presents data from only those books which were ranked by at least three readers.

The reading was organized under the direction of the author. He read all of the books, but his judgments are included in the average only when he was one of the readers specifically assigned to the book.

The usual procedure was followed: Each critic, working independently, recorded a rank, a grade, a comment, and a set of appropriate situations for each book. The judgments were talked out

in conference, revisions made, and summary cards drawn up from the individual records.[17]

In all, ratings were completed on eighty-eight books. (See Table 7). They are probably as complete a collection of these books as can be gotten together at any one time. All available catalogues, publishers', librarians' and school lists were examined. Requests were sent to publishers for every book noted, and for any additional volumes of the same kind. None of the better books has been overlooked, and the poorer sort are adequately represented.

Table No. 7

STAFF JUDGMENTS ON
BOOKS OF BIBLE STORIES RETOLD FOR CHILDREN

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
1.	George Hodges The Castle of Zion	5	VII
2.	Nora A. Smith Old Old Tales from the Old Old Book	5	VII
3.	James Baldwin Old Stories of the East	4	IV
4.	Dorothy Donnell Calhoun Boys in Patriarchal Homes	4	IV
5.	Anonymous (Nelson and Sons) Children of the Old Testament	4	IV
6.	George Hodges The Garden of Eden	4	V
7.	Myles Endicott Stories of the Bible; The People of the Chosen Land	4	VI
8.	Frances Weld Danielson Bible Story Book	3	III
9.	Dorothy Donnell Calhoun Girls of the Bible	3	IV
10.	Margaret Livingston Hill Bible Stories for Children	3	IV
11.	L. M. Pleasanton A Nursery Story of the Bible	3	IV

[17] Many of these books contained stories which appeared as if they might be worth something as independent selections. The readers tried judging them individually as they had done with the stories in the fairy tale unit. (See 47). They soon found, however, that the stories did not repay the time and effort spent upon them. Not only did they fall almost entirely below "4", but there was greater difficulty than had been anticipated in considering them as independent stories. In this respect, they turned out to be like the material listed under tradition in the fairy tale volume. The stories needed support from each other as parts of a single literature. Used as independent stories they not only lost their chief value, but became weak and pointless. The attempt was therefore abandoned, and no stories were listed separately.

Table No. 7 (continued)

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
12.	Dorothy Donnell Calhoun		
	Boys in the Days of the Prophets	3	V
13.	Sarah Elizabeth Dawes		
	Bible Stories for Young People	3	V
14.	Edward Leigh Pell		
	The Story of Joseph the Dreamer	3	V
15.	Edward Leigh Pell		
	The Story of Abraham as Told by Isaac	3	VI
16.	Edward Leigh Pell		
	The Story of David the Idol of the People	3	VI
17.	Anon. (Standard Pub. Co.)		
	Child Bible Stories	2	I-V
18.	Julia H. Johnston		
	Who Was It Stories	2	II
19.	Clara Belle Baker		
	The Bow in the Cloud	2	III
20.	Edna B. Rowe		
	Bible Stories for Little Folks	2	III
21.	A. G. Krottjer		
	Favorite Bible Stories	2	IV
22.	A. G. Krottjer		
	Fireside Bible Stories	2	IV
23.	J. H. Shonkweiler		
	Joseph	2	IV
24.	J. H. Shonkweiler		
	Moses	2	IV
25.	J. H. Shonkweiler		
	David	2	IV
26.	Mary Stewart		
	Tell Me a True Story	2	IV
27.	Tailer Andrews		
	Bible Stories for Children	2	V
28.	Lawton B. Evans		
	Heroes of Israel	2	V
29.	James Hartwell		
	The Boys of the Bible	2	V
30.	Eleanor Crosby Kemp		
	Bible Stories Retold for Children	2	V
31.	J. H. Willard		
	Beautiful Stories Series	2	V
32.	J. H. Willard		
	Children of the Bible Series	2	V
33.	Compiled (Putnam)		
	Stories from the Bible	2	VI

Table No. 7 (continued)

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
34.	Anna Frances Gearhart		
	The Story of Joseph	1	II
35.	Margaret Sangster		
	Stories from the Bible	1	II
36.	Paula M. Kohn		
	Stories from the Old Testament for the Little Child	1	III
37.	Addie Richman Altman		
	The Jewish Child's Bible Stories	1	IV
38.	James Hartwell		
	Uncle Jim's Stories	1	IV
39.	Caroline Kellogg		
	Stories from the Bible Told for Little Children	1	IV
40.	Caroline Kellogg		
	Stories from the Old Testament Told for Children	1	IV
41.	William D. Murray		
	Bible Stories to Tell Children	1	IV
42.	Dr. Mendel Silber		
	The Scripture Stories Told for Young Israel	1	IV
43.	J. E. Hodder Williams, ed		
	Children's Stories from the Old Testament	1	IV
44.	Nellie Hurst		
	The Best Bible Tales, Old Testament	1	V
45.	Anon. (Barse and Hopkins)		
	Bible Stories for Children	1	V
46.	F. E. Clark		
	Bible Autobiographies, and Others	1	VI
47.	Gertrude Smith		
	Bed Time Bible Stories for Children	0	I
48.	Catherine Shaw		
	Bible Stories from the Old Testament	0	IV
49.	C. M. Stevens		
	Wonderful Stories from the Wonderful Book	0	IV

STAFF JUDGMENTS ON
BOOKS OF BIBLE SELECTIONS FOR CHILDREN

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
50.	A. H. Nettleton		
	Old Testament Narratives	6	IX-XII
51.	F. J. Olcott		
	Bible Stories to Read and Tell	5	VII
52.	Eva March Tappan		
	An Old Old Story Book	5	V
53.	N. M. Hall		
	Tales of Captains and Conquest	5	VII
54.	Rhodes		
	Old Testament Narratives	5	IX

Table No. 7 (continued)

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
55.	A. M. Harris		
	Old Testament Readings for Schools	4	VI
56.	N. M. Hall		
	Tales of Pioneers and Kings	4	VII
57.	Clifton Johnson		
	Bible Stories My Children Love	4	VII
58.	Margaret Howard		
	Truly Stories from the Surely Bible	3	VI
59.	N. M. Hall		
	Tales of Far-off Days	3	VII
60.	*H. N. Snyder, Slections from the Old Testament		
61.	*J. Muilenberg, Specimens of Biblical Literature		
62.	*Cunliffe and Battenhouse, Century Readings in the Old Testament		

* High School or College Texts. Not ranked.

STAFF JUDGMENTS ON CHILDREN'S BIBLES

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
63.	H. A. Sherman and C. F. Kent		
	The Children's Bible	6	V-VIII
64.	Anon. (Macmillan)		
	The Older Children's Bible	5	VI
65.	J. B. Gilder, Compiler		
	The Bible for Young People	5	VII
66.	Anon. (Macmillan)		
	The Little Children's Bible	3	III
67.	E. B. Robertson		
	The Child's Bible	3	VI
68.	R. C. Gillie and J. Reid, ed.		
	The Bible for Youth	3	VII

STAFF JUDGMENTS ON THE BIBLE STORY RETOLD FOR CHILDREN

No.	Book	Rank	Grade
69.	James Baikie		
	The Bible Story, A connected narrative retold from Holy Scripture	5	XI
70.	Helen Ward Banks		
	Stoke's Wonder Book of the Bible	4	VII
71.	J. E. Hodder Williams, ed		
	Kings of Israel and Judah	2	V
72.	E. E. Egermeier		
	Bible Story Book	2	VI
73.	J. E. Hodder Williams, ed		
	The New Line upon Line	1	V
74.	Josephine Pollard		
	The Bible and its Story	1	VII

2.   Ranks, Grades and Situations.

1.   Literary Excellence.   What are these books worth in terms of the standards of excellence and the scale of merit already used to measure the original stories?   The first 65 books to be completed were chosen for a statistical study of this point.   The ranks were averaged and thrown into a distribution table.   (See accompanying histogram).

Figure No. 3

Distribution of Staff Judgments
on 65 books of Bible Stories

with Frequency Polygon of Staff Judgments on
875 books of Fairy Tales, Myths, and Legends
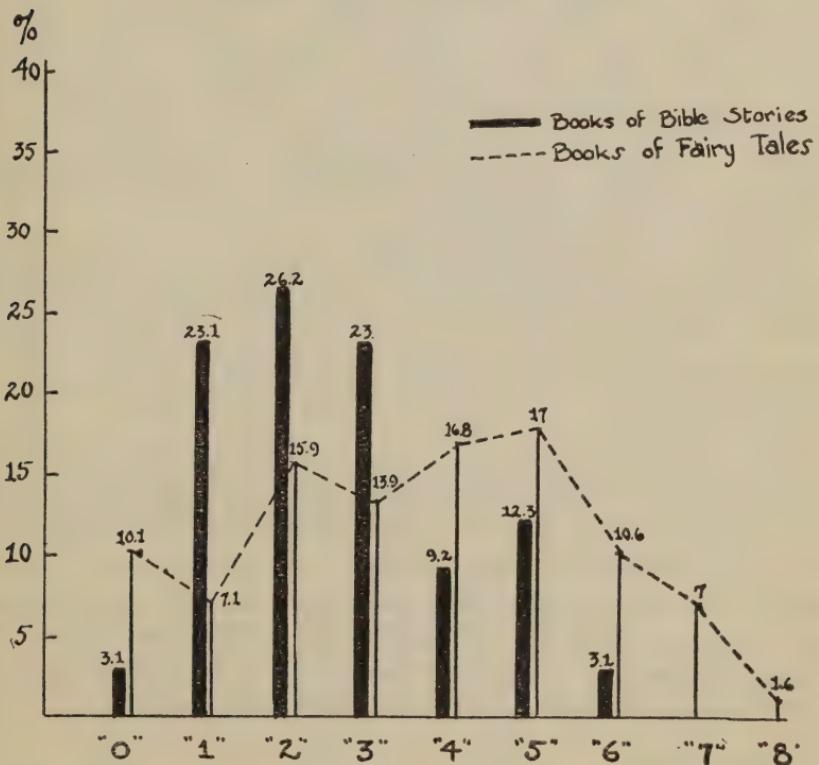
Number of Bible books:	2	15	17	15	6	8	2		
Number of Fairy Tales:	87	61	136	119	144	146	91	60	14

If the dividing line between the valuable and the worthless books is taken at ''4'' in accordance with the practice of the staff (see Chapter II, pp. 12-13), then approximately three-fourths of the books are not worth the child's attention. In comparison with the showing in the field of fairy tales and legends, this is woefully poor. Sixteen books against five hundred and eigthy-three! That is, a set of standards so generous as to admit fifty-three per cent of the present mass of fairy tale books eliminated all but twenty per cent of the books of Bible stories and adaptations. None of these ranked any higher than ''6'', while eight per cent of the other group climbed to the ''7'' and ''8'' levels.

2. *Grade Placement and Ethical Situations*. The authors of these books have succeeded in one respect; the books are placed in earlier grade years than the Old Testament materials from which they have been adapted. (Table 7). According to the distribution of books among the several grades, the fifth is the peak year off interest. This means that in vocabulary and style the books are more suited to the younger child than the Old Testament sections from which they have been taken.

On the other hand, the fact remains that the books average lower if anything than the Bible itself in literary excellence. The grade factor seems to be intimately related with this. The lower the books are placed in the grades, the poorer they become in quality. (The correlation is .61 $\pm$ .05). The few good books are listed later than the sixth grade.

For the most part, the readers have found the books of slight character value. Only fourteen have been given any situations at all. Eleven of these are listed under Tradition. Their chief value lies in the addition to a child's cultural background which a knowledge of Hebrew legend and folktale might contribute. Aside from this situation, only the following occur: Religious Values (5 times), Knowledge (3 times), History, and Ideals (2 times each), and Duty-Ideals, Family, and Other Peoples (once each).

3. Validation.

Are the majority of these books really too poor to recommend to any child for reading? The consistency of the readers in reaching this conclusion is not sufficient evidence in itself, although the correlations between the several readers run from .64 to .77, and the testimony of the errors of estimate is to the effect that another

group of readers following the same methods would shift only four or five of the sixty-five books from their present position relative to the line of acceptance or rejection for the *Guide*.[18]

Only 16 of the books ranked above "3". These were too few in number to attempt to validate their relative positions in the upper levels of the scale. As the particular rank below "4" which an inferior book received is not of primary importance, the crucial question as to the trustworthiness of these ratings centers around the point of division between the recommended and the excluded books. That is, would outside opinion agree in regarding the books ranked "4" or more, better than those ranked "3"?

A direct answer to this question would have involved the setting up of a more extensive reading program with outside groups than was at all practicable. At the same time, a relatively quick test of this point was possible by comparing the books of Bible stories with other books already judged as good or inferior. The line between "4" and "3" books had already been carefully validated in the fairy tale unit. (*47*, Chapter III). The readers were using the same scale of excellence, and according to their own intention books of the same rank from the two units were comparable in excellence. The method of paired comparisons with books from this unit offered itself therefore as the most convenient approach to the problem of validation.

The writer put together forty-three pairs of books from the two units. A book of Bible stories was matched with a book of fairy tales or legends which the readers had placed in the same grade-year and which was as comparable to it as it was possible to obtain, but which ranked either above or below the Bible book in excel-

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[18]   Table No. 8

Correlations of Rankings—One
Reader Against the Average of the Others

Reader	No. books	r	Pe
Ba	50	.629	.055
Be	54	.75	.04
Cl	42	.64	.06
Ne	54	.77	.037

These correlations indicate an unusual amount of agreement in rating of this type. They are as high as the best correlations obtained in the fairy tale unit of the project. When the individual ranks are correlated against the average, the "r" is .87 ± .013.

lence. (For titles of these books see original study, Appendix I).
The problem was to determine whether groups of outside readers
would confirm or reverse the judgments of the staff that one book
in each pair was better than the other. Ten members of a class in
Character Education and two other individuals consented to act as
readers.

They were asked to examine each pair and to read enough to de-
cide which of the two they would prefer to give to a child of the
age indicated by the grade-year on the rating sheet. The different
readers judged as many books as their leisure time allowed. For
this reason, the number of judgments on each pair varied. Twenty-
three of the pairs of books judged received only one or two judg-
ments apiece.[19]

Twenty of the pairs were read by three or more judges. In
treating these judgments statistically, the ratings on each pair of
books were massed. One book was considered better than the other
if a majority of the judgments ranked it so. The data thus offered
only two categories. Either the outside readers agreed with the
staff in preferring one book to another, or they disagreed. Out of
the 20 sets of judgments, 11 confirmed and 8 reversed the staff
ratings, while in one case the judgments of the outside group were
equally divided. Of the 8 pairs on which the outside groups re-
versed the staff judgments, all but 2 were books which, according
to the staff, differed from each other by only one degree of merit.

If the results are restated in order to show which of the books
of Bible stories that ranked ''3'' or lower were preferred by the
outside readers above ''4'' or better books of fairy tales, and which
of the better Bible books were thought to be inferior to books which
had been excluded from the fairy tale *Guide*, the figures are as fol-
lows:

No. of Bible books whose status remained the same 14
No. of Bible books raised from excluded to accepted rank 4
Bible books lowered from accepted to excluded group 1

Of the five books whose status has been changed, two differ from

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[19] The data are interesting, though too slight for statistical handling:

Paired Comparisons	Read by 1 judge	Read by 2 judges
Judgment agrees with staff	6	5
Judgment disagrees with staff	1	2
Judgments equally divided	9	0

each other by only one step in the scale, according to the staff judgments.

Three of the outside group read a considerable number of the books. One of them judged 31 pairs. Out of these, she agreed in 24 cases with the preferences of the staff. Of the nine disagreements, only four effected any change with regard to excluding or recommending the book for a select list; and two of these were books that differed from each other by only one step of merit.

A second reader made judgments on 14 pairs, with a perfect record of agreement. The author cannot discover any extraneous factor which might have helped her to be so lucky. Like the others in the group, she was unconnected with the project; there was evidently no particular prejudice in favor of, or against, Bible stories, as the paired books included both good and inferior books of each type.

A third reader agreed with the staff on ten out of twelve pairs of books. One of the disagreements lowered a ''4'' fairy tale book below a ''3'' book of Bible stories; the other raised a book of Bible stories into the recommended list.

Altogether ,the results confirm the validity of the readers' judgments. The books which the staff has ranked as inferior were judged poorer than the recommended books of fairy stories, while the few books of Bible stories ranked higher were preferred over books of fairy stories that had already been excluded by the staff. It is clear that if the staff has been too harsh in its decision to exclude most of these books from a select list for children, then it has also been too severe upon the much smaller portion of books which it has excluded from Volume I of the *Guide*.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. Problem

Among the literatures usually regarded as having great worth
for character training, the Bible, and particularly those portions of
the Bible which make up its narrative, have held a supreme place.
The problem of this thesis has been to subject that part of the
Biblical narrative which lies in the Old Testament to a set of pro-
cedures by which the actual worth which it had for the child could
be determined.

2. Method

For the purpose, the author had full access to the resources and
full use of the staff of the Institute of Character Research. This
staff had developed a set of techniques by which children's litera-
tures were being judged. A scale of merit ranked books and stories
according to standards of literary excellence. A list of situations
and attitudes was used to locate the specific character value of the
stories. Each story was also placed in the most appropriate grade-
year for the child.

3. Rank, grade, and situations for 63 Old Testament stories

These procedures were applied to sixty-three of the favorite Old
Testament stories, selected according to their popularity in six
current graded courses in religious education. The stories were
read by seven readers of the staff who ranked them as to excellence,
gave each a preferred grade, and recorded situations for each.

a. Rank. According to these judgments, only six of the stories
were worthwhile enough to be included in a bibliography of choice
reading materials for children. Chance-half comparison of these
judgments gave a reliability correlation of .684. The correlations
of the averages of two readers against two, and two against one,
amounted to .455 and .524, respectively. The correlations of each
individual judge against the average ranged from .555 to .693.
These all indicate that the judgments of the readers as to the ex-
cellence of the stories are quite steady. A correlation of .548 with

the popularity of the stories in the six graded courses in religious education furnished some measure of the validity of the rankings.

b. Grade. Contrary to the usual practice of giving the stories to all ages, the readers definitely placed them for the most part in the later grade years. Seventeen of the stories they were unable to grade at all. The gap between content and manner was too large to cover by a compromise.

c. Ethical Value. Using the situations technique, by which the points at which a story had ethical value could be located, the readers found no character value in twenty-five of the stories other than their cultural significance as Hebrew Tradition. The remaining stories averaged less than two situations apiece. The readers were able to discover little religious value in the stories whatsoever.

Evidence was uncovered from a number of sources to support this conclusion. The general trend away from the use of the Old Testament stories in the teaching of religion, and the peculiar difficulties which teachers and story tellers meet in adapting the stories so that they are presentable for children furnished indirect evidence that the moral values in the stories are not clear-cut and unambiguous. Outside groups, in classifying the stories under situations, while they showed only a fair amount of agreement with the staff judgments on specific situations, established the validity of the situations device and the listing of few instead of many values for Bible stories.

4. Types of Supplementary Material

Attention was turned to the various types of material which attempt to adapt the Old Testament stories for children. According to the original limitations of the project, all text-books and lesson leaves were excluded from consideration. This left four types of books: Children's Bibles, selections from the Bible for Children, books on the story of the Bible, and books of Bible stories retold for children.

As many of these books as could be secured from publication houses and libraries were read and judged according to the usual procedures of the Institute. Four readers worked on the material. Altogether some eighty-eight books were ranked, graded and given situations.

5.   Rank, grade and situations on books of Bible stories

  a.   Readers' Judgments.   Sixty-five of these books were chosen
for statistical study.   Only twenty-five per cent of these seemed
even average in quality.   This small proportion was in marked con-
trast to the fifty-three per cent of books in the fairy tale field judged
to be of real merit by the same readers .   The grades on the books
placed them slightly lower than the Old Testament stories them-
selves were placed.   Few situations were recorded.   On the whole,
the books were very inferior in literary quality, not usable in the
early grades for which they were meant, and singularly lacking in
moral value.

  b.   Reliabilities.   These judgments displayed as consistent a re-
liability as did the judgments on books in the fairy tale field.   The
correlations between the individual judges and the average of the
other judges ranking the same book ranged from .64 to .77.   The
likelihood that another combination of the same readers would
seriously alter the ranking of any particular book is very slight.

  c.   Validity.   One hundred and forty paired comparisons made
by outside readers between a Bible story book and a book from the
fairy tale field disclosed a large degree of agreement with the judg-
ments of the staff.   It is likely that no other group of outside read-
ers would be inclined to alter seriously the ranks of these books.

6.   Conclusion

  It remains for others to say whether the values disclosed by the
techniques of this study are the bed-rock upon which all use of the
Old Testament for character training must build.   The study itself
does not point to any course of action as particularly wise.   It
recognizes that the way of profound thinking and deep living often
passes over such waste ground as the investigation has shown many
of the Bible stories to be.   It is farthest from its intentions to deny
the richness of mind and the integrity of heart of those lives which
have found sustenance in the Old Testament stories.   It merely
asks the question, in conclusion :—Would it not be better to transfer
the time, the energy and the devotion that has been lavished upon
the Old Testament narrative to more fruitful material?

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APPENDIX I

STANDARDS FOR JUDGING
THE WORTH OF
LITERATURE

STANDARDS FOR JUDGING THE WORTH OF LITERATURE
Used by the Research Station
in Character Education
At the State University of Iowa
in the preparation of a

Guide to Character Training Literatures

1. *Organic Unity*—singleness of impression: integration, proportion, emphasis, economy.
2. *Craftsmanship*—appropriate treatment: design, phraseology, diction.
3. *Emotional Tone*—communication of feeling: atmosphere, flavor, taste, texture, color; lower-sense imagery; intimacy of appeal.
4. *Effectiveness*—a. Significance of content: vital; source in human interests, needs, and experience.

        b. Vigor and momentum; plot-interest, dramatic action, cumulative repetition, contrast.
5. *Artistry in appeal*—is suggestive, not didactic; has sincerity, sympathy, grace.
6. *Truthfulness*—harmony with fact and law.
7. *Appeal to Fundamental Attitudes* such as loyalty, courage, friendliness, reverence, etc.
8. *Orientation—adjustment of personality.*
        a. Higher self-realization
        b. Social re-centering
        c. Re-centering in ideal values and objects.

Explanations of the Individual Points of the Standards.

1. *Organic Unity*

The rule that a work of art should possess unity was early applied to literature by the Greeks who looked for ''harmony'', ''proportion'', or ''measure'', as they called this quality. ''Nothing in excess''—their rule—is still indispensable. Each character or incident or paragraph should be so organized into the main theme or motif that the literary product shall be an integrated whole. Competent handling of proportion and emphasis, restrained richness of detail, ruthless lopping-off of excrescence, and subordination of secondary patterns to the main design help to make a piece of literature that can be seen and felt in its entirety, just as is true in a rightly constructed piece in the field of graphic and plastic arts. So the artist achieves one harmonious and forceful impression.

2. *Craftsmanship*

The various skills involved in a lucid and definite portrayal of impression and thought have been rightly presented by most of the books in rhetoric and literary criticism. These have reference to diction, phrasing, sentence structure and rhythm, paragraphing and the like, as well as to the mechanics of punctuation, grammar and syntax. With these materials the discriminating workman weaves the appropriate design which communicates accurately, clearly, and beautifully every delicate nuance of his thought and feeling. The child as much as the adult deserves and loves the master hand in literature.

3. *Emotional Tone*

The notion that a selection shall have ''atmosphere'', ''flavor'', ''texture'', or emotional tone is old. But the knowledge of the mechanisms involved is new. The secret of this hitherto rather indefinite and indescribable characteristic of good literature is the skillful use, by the author, of the imagery from the ''lower senses'', i.e. touch, taste, smell, equilibrium, pain, temperature, kinaesthetic and organic. Hearing stands halfway between the higher and lower divisions of the special senses. Sight, the ''highest'' of the senses, has falsely been supposed to be the most useful aesthetically. The excessive use of it gives a style that is hard, chilly and too objective. Lovable writers employ a deal of visual imagery, but always as a means of symbolizing the meanings arising from the other more impelling sources. The writers who seek the door to the intellect use the eye. The writers who burst the doors of our feelings use the warm and rich intimacy of lower sense imagery and its connected emotion-patterns.

4. *Effectiveness*

Literature cuts deeply as its content has human significance. It is only as solidly effective as the depth of the foundation it digs into the basic interests, needs and experiences of humanity. This means that good literature must have body, ''stuff.'' It dare not be trivial. It need not be serious. Sometimes it moves mightily like the tides; sometimes, however, it is as delicate as flowers and as airy as a dream. Even then it need not be thin. Some of the most forceful stories doubtless are those written just for fun. There is health in humor. Children can laugh away a lot of foolishness that sober thinking fails to uproot.

Powerful writing brings to this vitality and robustness of material a mastery of those bits of technique which make for vigor and movement because their appeal is also rooted in the fundamental interests of human nature. Of these may be listed: a. plot interest, the dynamic procession of character and incident to a cumulative climax; b. story value, the play upon universal interest in heroes, poetic justice, ingenuity, rough fun, tragic pity, and the like, c. contrast,—in Hamlet there are half a hundred situations in which the mind is pulled like a taut string between opposing sentiments or ideas; d. reinforcement by indirection, ''practices'', the intensifying of theme by the use of cumulative repetitions. Where these devices find a rich and significant content upon which to work, literature has force.

5. *Artistry in Appeal*

While a piece of literature may be pregnant with ethical implications, it should carry them gracefully. Writers with moral unction elect to reform children by talking up to them and in so doing offend their intelligence and their tastes. In like manner the high-and-mighty writer who tries to unbend by talking down to children only succeeds in laying bare the insincerity of his art. "This story teaches" and "from this tale we learn" are parts of the ritual of poor writing, just as the artist teacher has learned to feel with the child, not for it. He will not, as Felix Adler phrases it, "Pull the plum out of the moral pudding." To be effective is usually to be non-didactic.

6. *Truthfulness*

Truthfulness demands of a writer that literary integrity which refuses to prostitute the powers of his art to dishonest portrayal of the facts of life and law, no matter what the supposedly laudable end. There is a temptation to play fast and loose with fact and law for the sake of impressing moral truths upon children. The nature-fakers are often guilty of this fault; likewise those who distort history and biography for the sake of deriving "morals" therefrom. Of course one enjoys and should enjoy the tales of animals that talk, and loves the flights of fancy that makes-believe in gods, fairies, and heroes. All he requires is that the characters and situations shall be true to human nature and to the world order.

7. *Appeal to Fundamental Attitudes*

Good literature usually appeals to the fundamental attitudes or "primary affections" as Wordsworth called them, such as kindliness, co-operation, courage, loyalty, joy in achievement, freedom, and admiration. If the objection should be made that literature at its best is the free expression of the pure joy of life and the representation through symbols of the love of the beautiful, the reply is that these two attitudes are among the basal "primary affections." "Art for arts sake" is but another way of saying "Art for life's sake." Literature justifies its existence as it appeals either explicitly or implicitly to the fundamental human attitudes.

8. *Orientation*

In the last analysis good literature helps in adjustment of personality; it adds its share to the influences which create an individual who can move easily and familiarly in all spheres of valuable experience. This process in its development takes the form of a three-fold re-centering of the personality; a. a rebuilding of plastic lower-self materials into a high self-hood of refined tastes insights, and high purposes; b. a re-centering in others who are considered as ends in themselves and appreciated in a spirit of friendliness, co-operation, and loyalty; the goal is communal thinking and living; c. a re-centering in a world of ideal values, often conceived of as caught up in an "Oversoul" or "Presence" or "World-Order" or "Universe" or "Pan Kalon" or "God" to which one responds with simplicity of mind, with admiration, and with reverence.

This matter of "orientation" is the high point at which great literature viewed aesthetically and great literature considered ethically become identical.

APPENDIX II

Table No. 9

Individual Judgments of Staff on 63 Old Testament Stories

				Readers				
Title	Se	Ba	Ne	Cl	Ve	Sm	Be	*Average*
Ruth	6	3	4	6	7	6	5	5
Joseph Cycle	5	4	2	6	5	5	4	4
Nehemiah the builder	4	3	4	5	3	5	4	4
David and Goliath	5	4	1	4	4	6	5	4
The creation	5	4	1	4	4	6	5	4
Abraham offering Isaac	0	4	4	4		5	5	4
Ten commandments	5	1	2	3	2	4	2	3
Samuel and Eli	4	3	2	2		3	2	3
David and Jonathan	4	2	2	2	4		4	3
The Red Sea	2	2	2	3	4	3	3	3
Abraham and Lot	5	2	0	3	3	4	2	3
Josiah's reform	3	0	2	3	3	4	3	3
Joshua's farewell	3	2	2	5	3	5	3	3
Joshua's-conquest of Canaan	2	2	2	4	4	5	2	3
Healing of Naanan	4	3	2	2	4	3	4	3
Solomon builds the temple	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	3
Joseph making self known		3	2	0	5	5	2	3
Jonah	2	4	2	3		5	3	3
David spares Saul	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	3
Noah's ark	5	3	2	2	4	3	2	3
Daniel in the lion's den	3	1	4	3	3	5	4	3
Solomon's kingship	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	3
David and Abigail	4	2	0	3	3	2	4	3
Rebekah at the well	5	3	2	4	3	2	3	3
Daniel in the furnace	3	3	4	1	4	4	4	3
Manna and quails	2	2	4	3	3	4	3	3
Jacob's return	2	2	3	3	4	2	3	3
Moses in basket boat	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2
David the shepherd boy	4	1	2	2	4	2	2	2
Moses' call	2	2	0	2	4	2	4	2
Saul made king	2	3	2	2	2	1	3	2
Elijah rebukes Ahab	2	2	0	0	3		2	2
Gideon	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	2
Jacob's dream	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
Samuel and Hannah	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Joseph caring for his father		3	2	0	3	3	1	2
Garden of Eden	1	2	2		2	2	1	2

Table No. 9 Continued

| | | | Readers | | | | | |
Title	Se	Ba	Ne	Cl	Ve	Sm	Be	Average
Division of the kingdom	3	2	0	3	0		1	2
Daniel refusing food	2	3	2	3		2	4	2
Esther	2	2	1	1	5	5	1	2
The still small voice	3	0	0	2		3	1	2
David plays for Saul	4	2	0	2	2	2	1	2
Elisha at woman's house	2	3	0	3	3	0	0	2
Jeremiah writes a book	3	1	0	3	4	2	3	2
Abraham and the angels	2	1	2	2	6	2	2	2
Death of Saul	2	4	2	0	2	0	2	2
Joseph testing his brothers		3	2	0	3	2	2	2
Joseph and the famine		2	2	0	4	3	1	2
Samson	0	2	2		6	3	2	2
Moses' death	2	2	2		2	2	3	2
David and Absalom	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Abraham's adventure	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	1
Brothers selling Joseph		3	0	0	2	3	0	1
Joseph and the coat		1	1	0	1	3	2	1
Deborah and Barak	3	1	2	0	3	1	0	1
Elijah at the Brook Cherith	2	0	2	0	0	2	1	1
The passover	2	2	1		1	1	1	1
The plagues	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	1
Jacob cheating Esau	0	3	2	0	0	5	1	1
Ezra's prayer	0	1	1	3	0	1	2	1
Report of the spies	0	1	1	3	0	1	2	1
Joseph and the butler		0	0	0	3	2	0	1
Elijah at Carmel	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

APPENDIX II

Table No. 10

Grade Placement
of Old Testament Stories in Six
Current Graded Courses in Religious Education

Story	Pre-School	1-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	10-16	Grade
Moses in basket boat[1]	11	5	4	5	2		IV
The creation	3	4	4	1	2	2	V
Joseph making self known	4	6	4	2			V
David and Goliath	3	5	4	6	4		VI
Abraham and Lot	2	5	5	5	2		VI
Noah's Ark	8	4	5	1	1	2	VI
Daniel in Lion's Den	3	4	3	5	1		VI
Daniel in furnace	1	3	4	3			VI
Manna and quails	1	5	3	1			VI
Jacob's dream	3	5	5	1	1	2	VI
Joseph caring for father	3	6	3				VI
Daniel refusing food	1	6	4	2		1	VI
Joseph testing brothers		2	3	3	1		VI
Joseph and famine	1	2	3	2			VI
Brothers selling Joseph	3	6	6	3			VI
Joseph and Coat	5	6	2	2	1		VI
The plagues			4	5	2	1	VI
Joseph and butler		2	1	2			VI
David and Jonathan	3	5	5	4	5	1	VII
Healing of Naaman	3	9	4	4		1	VII
David spares Saul		4	4	6	2		VII
Jacob's return			1	2			VII
David, shepherd boy	9	6	3	4	1		VII
Gideon	2	3	6	5	2	1	VII
David plays for Saul		3	1	3	1		VII
David and Absalom			1	4			VII
Nehemiah the builder	1	5	5	9	3	7	VIII
Ten Commandments		4	6	8	3	8	VIII

[1] After Smith; the numbers refer to the number of times each story occurs, within the given grade-years. The Roman numeral is the "preferred grade," according to the present study.

Table No. 10 Continued

| Story	Pre-School	1-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	10-16	Grade
Samuel and Eli	7	9	4	2	3	3	VIII
The Red Sea	1	4	5	6	2	3	VIII
Josiah's reform		5	6	3	3	4	VIII
Solomon builds temple	1	3	3	4	1	5	VIII
David and Abigail		4	2	3	2		VIII
Rebekah at well	2	3	2	2			VIII
Esther		3	3	2	2	1	VIII
Deborah and Barak		1	4	4	2	4	VIII
Joshua's farewell							IX
Joshua's conquest Canaan		3	4	6	2	4	IX
Solomon's kingship		1	1	5	2	3	IX
Jeremiah writes a book		2	3	3	2	3	IX
Elijah at Carmel		4	5	7	3	4	IX
Ruth	3	4	4	3	4	6	X
Ezra's prayer		2		2		3	X
Report of spies		2	2	3			X
Abraham offering Isaac		2	1	2	3	2	Adult
Jonah	2		2	2	4	6	No G
Moses' call	1	4	5	9	3	4	,,
Saul made king		1	2	5	5	4	,,
Elijah rebukes Ahab		2	1	7	4	3	,,
Samuel and Hannah	4	5	2	2	1	1	,,
Garden of Eden	2	4	3	1	1	2	,,
Division of kingdom			1	4	2	6	,,
The still small voice	2	2	3	4	2		,,
Elisha at woman's house	2	4	2	2			,,
Abraham and angels	1	4	1	1			,,
Death of Saul			1	4	1	1	,,
Samson		1	3	4		1	,,
Moses' death			1	4	1		,,
Abraham's adventure	1	4	6	5	3	3	,,
Elijah at Brook Cherith	4	4	2	4			,,
The passover		1	4	4		2	,,
Jacob cheating Esau		1	3	4			,,

APPENDIX III

Reliability of the Staff Judgments on Literary Excellence

As the distribution into which the rankings fell corresponded rather closely to the normal curve upon which correlation methods are based, reliabilities

Figure No. 4
Scattergram of Chance-half Averages
Rankings on 63 Old Testament Stories

Averages: Ve, Sm, Be.
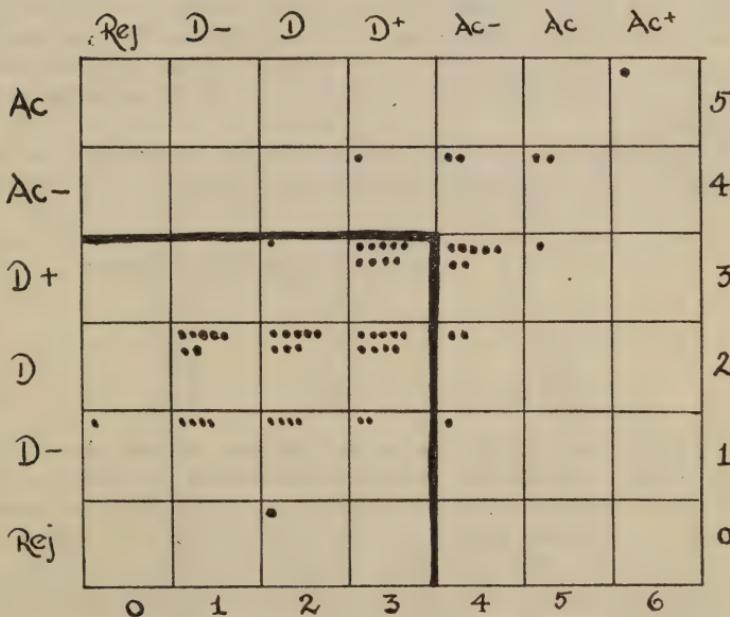
	AM	
AM — Se, Ba, Ne, Cl		2.27
AM — Ve, Sm, Be		2.72
SD — Se, Ba, Ne, Cl		.96
SD — Ve, Sm, Be		1.22
r		.684 ± .045
St. err. of est.		.91
		.71

could be determined in terms of product-moment "r's" and standard errors of estimate. Four different methods were used.

1. Chance-half Reliability

The averages of four of the readers were correlated against the averages of the other three and a correlation of .68 was obtained. (See accompanying scattergram). The reliability "r" (by Brown's formula) is .814; it indicates the amount of agreement which another group of seven readers, equally trained and equipped, might be expected to show with the staff ratings. Considering the restricted distribution and the small number of cases, this correlation points to a high degree of steadiness in judging. Only three or four stories would change places with reference to the line of inclusion or exclusion (between "3" and "4") if the ranking were repeated under similar conditions.

2. Correlation between Readers familiar with Bible Project and Readers Unfamiliar with Project

Three of the readers had already been reading and judging books of Bible stories when asked to rank these sixty-three selections. The other readers came to the reading without any previous experience in judging Biblical materials. The rankings of these two groups were averaged, and correlated, giving an r of .537 ± .06, and a reliability "r" of .71 (according to Brown's formula).

Certain noticeable differences occurred in the averages and the standard deviations. The inexperienced judges ranked the stories, on the average, half

Table No. 11

	Experienced Group	Inexperienced Group
AM	2.11	2.66
SD	1.03	1.41
St. err. of est.	.89	1.18

a step higher than did the readers who had been working with retellings of Bible stories. The standard deviations indicate that they also used considerably more of the scale than did the other three. In addition, they ranked seven stories "4" or better which were rated "3" or lower by the three more experienced readers. The explanation for this difference is conjectural. But it had already been observed in connection with the fairy tale unit that length of acquaintance with poor material made the readers increasingly severe in their ratings, and probably more just.

3. Correlations of Individual Readers against the Average of the Seven Readers

The correlations of the following table are an indication of the divergence of individual readers from the average. The "r's" are not so significant, however, as the averages and the deviations.

There is a difference of 1.22 steps between the lowest and the highest average of the group. This difference is similar to that which appeared in the

Table No. 12

Reader	r	PE	AM	SD	St. err. est.	AM aver.	SD aver.
Ba	.564	.059	2.14	1.08	.87	2.31	.96
Be	.617	1.032	2.34	1.31	1.02	2.32	.95
Cl	.65	.051	2.20	1.59	1.21	2.33	.95
Ne	.555	.054	1.66	1.20	.995	2.31	.96
Se	.62	.056	2.64	1.50	1.17	2.40	.96
Sm	.694	.046	2.87	1.51	1.12	2.30	.96
Ve	.637	.045	2.88	1.57	1.21	2.30	.95

fairy tale unit. It represents the individual characteristics of each reader, for which allowance might have been made by index weightings, had the number of Bible stories been sufficient to warrant it.

One of the readers of the group (Se) judged the stories while residing in another city. Her judgments correlate .62 with the average of the whole group, and .563 $\pm$ .06 with the average of the other six readers. This agreement suggests that the reliability of the readers is due to a real agreement in viewpoint, and not to any external factors.

One other point should be noted. The writer has contributed his own ratings to the study. It might be supposed that the reliability of his judgments would be surprisingly high simply from the fact that he directed the project. The statistics indicate the contrary. The writer's correlation (Be) is medium-ly high. His average most closely approximates the average of the group; but his standard deviation is reasonably large and his standard error of estimate not smaller than the average of the others.